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REOPENING OF THE LUXEMBOURG GALLERY.

THE reconstruction of the galleries of the Luxembourg, and the consequent removal of the works of the long-deceased artists, such as Delacroix, Delaroche, Ary Scheffer, and others, to the Louvre, has been an event of considerable importance to the world of modern French art. Of course the *habitué* of the Luxembourg will sadly miss the great pictures which used to enchain the attention at once of every visitor, 'The Death of Elizabeth' and 'The Children of King Edward,' by Delaroche; the 'Dante and Virgil,' 'The Massacre at Scio,' and 'The Jewish Wedding in Morocco,' by Delacroix; the wonderful portraits and the exquisite 'Angelica' of Ingres; and other *chefs-d'œuvre* of the modern school. But these paintings belong to the past, after all, and the Luxembourg, by every law of event and construction, is essentially the representative gallery of the present. The immortals have put on their immortality and have departed to their own place—the halls of the Louvre—leaving their vacant spaces to be filled by the still living exponents of the art of the present day. These removals, with the construction of the long, narrow gallery, which has just been finished, and which now unites the two divisions of the Palace of the Luxembourg, give space and room enough to the directors of the Musée for the proper display of the treasures which they have acquired during the last few years, many of which had been before, for lack of room, hidden away in storehouses and back-buildings, and now take their proper places on the walls of the Luxembourg.

The large main apartment bears, of course, the most marked imprint of these changes. The 'St.-Louis' of M. Cabanel hangs on the place formerly occupied by Delaroche's 'Death of Elizabeth.' Hebert's 'Italian Peasants' has taken the place of 'Les Enfants d'Edouard.' The magnificent 'Siege of Corinth,' by Tony Robert Fleury, which won the grand prize at the *Salon* of 1870, now occupies the farthest angle of the left-hand wall, facing the dim and involved allegorical picture of 'The Divina Tragedia' of M. Chénard. This brilliant and interesting work has never before, we believe, found place on the walls of the Luxembourg. It is a fine composition, and shows remarkable vigour of handling, and skill in grouping. The group of half-nude females in the foreground, some prostrate, with rent garments, before their deity, others absorbed in the contemplation of their own anguish, or plunged in a misery too deep for words, is extremely striking. Very touching is the figure of the young mother, who bends in speechless awe above the dead infant, lying across her knees, and very powerful and full of expression is the erect, haughty figure of one proud beauty, who, with unconquered spirit, glances in defiance at the victorious general, that, superb on his prancing steed, is visible in the background. Certain of the accessories, such as the armour, rich tapestries, &c., in the background, are painted with remarkable skill and finish. Cabanel's fine 'Francesca da Rimini' has also been removed to this room, where its singular and varied merits are seen to better advantage, and under a better light than they before were, in the comparative dimness of the smaller side-room. The wonderful foreshortening of the figure of Paolo, and of the outstretched arm of Francesca, now strike the eye under this more favourable light more forcibly than ever. How touching, too, is the attitude of the dead girl, with her head resting upon her lover's arm! The one defect in this picture is the scowling, sinister image of the revengeful husband. Cabanel should have left out that figure, and given us only the effects of the vengeance, the slain pair, stricken down in the first avowal of their mutual passion. Nevertheless the picture is a fine one, and worthily represents the talent of one of France's greatest living painters. Near it hangs Gérôme's 'Cock-fight,' which is far from being an adequate specimen of the genius of that gifted artist. In all its glow and warmth of colouring, its perfect growth of a languid, lustrous, southern summer's day, it scarcely gives a good idea of the powers of the painter of 'L'Almeïde,' of 'Cleopatra,' and of 'Phryné.' Fromentin's 'Hawking Party in Algiers' has found a place in this room, as has also one of the two Meissoniers, which the Musée possesses; this one, the largest of the two, being 'Napoleon III. at the Battle

of Solferino.' The other one, 'Napoleon III. surrounded by his Staff,' hangs in the newly-constructed gallery. This tiny gem, in whose minute surface Meissonier seems to have concentrated all his varied and wondrous powers, has received a wanton injury, probably from the hands of some infuriated Communist. Across the central figure, that of the Emperor on horseback, there extends a scratch, as of some sharp instrument. Though the damage has been repaired as far as possible, it is still visible to a close observer.

In the small room which opens out of the main hall, at one end of it, has been placed Lefebvre's 'Truth,' which, like 'The Siege of Corinth,' was one of the acquisitions of 1870. The goddess is represented as a nude and beautiful woman, at the bottom of the proverbial well; with one hand she steadies herself by clinging to the well-rope, while in the other she holds aloft a crystal lamp. There is much power displayed in the treatment of the fine, energetic head; the pose, too, of the arms and torso is admirable, but it has been objected that the left hip is thrust out too much for anatomical correctness, as well as for actual grace. A very graceful composition by the same artist, 'The Nymph and Infant Bacchus,' hangs just opposite. In this same room also has been placed the large Bouguereau, 'The Interment of a Christian Martyr in the Catacombs,' which, though differing widely from his usual style, is still replete with his peculiar delicacy and sweetness of expression. The head of the young girl, who is pressing the hand of the dead woman to her lips, is very charming, and full of tender pathos.

Returning to the main hall, we must pass into the long, narrow gallery in which, by-the-way, artists are forbidden to work at taking copies after twelve o'clock in the day, so that the circulation may not be impeded. Here we find many fine works which have been lost to sight for years past, though dear to art-memory of all those who ever beheld them. M. Belly's 'Pilgrims on their Road to Mecca' hangs opposite to a large landscape by Camille Pous, representing 'The Campagna near Rome,' with two of the long-horned Italian cattle in the foreground. A very singular picture, which bears date 1872, and which was entirely new to me, is an Assyrian or Egyptian scene, by M. du Noüy Lecomte. Its subject I was unable to discover, as the new official catalogues have not yet been issued, and the officials in charge could give me no satisfaction respecting it. It represents the terrace of an Egyptian palace, high above a city which lies in calm and silence beneath the moonlit glory of a tropical midnight. Upon this terrace is placed a couch, whereon reclines a loose-garbed, ringletted potentate, who gazes ahead, with fixed and sinister glance, over the slumbering city. In the foreground lie, prone in death, the corpses of three dusky slaves, evidently smitten down by the monarch himself, as his blood-stained sword reclines against the head of his couch. The Egyptian accessories, such as the drapery, costumes, lanterns, &c., the low-braced, massive architecture of the city, and the dress and pose of the central figures, are all carefully studied and admirably rendered, as is also the pale yet intense lustre of the unseen moon, which lights up the whole scene. It is a striking picture, original in conception and forcible in treatment. Another apparently-recent acquisition is Leyen Perrin's 'Return from the Fishing.' The young fisher-girl who leads the procession is pretty enough to catch more hearts than fish. Tony Robert Fleury has sent from Rome 'A Group of Old Women at Prayers.' A more picturesque cluster of old Italian hags can scarcely be imagined. Every type of wrinkled feminine old age seems represented there, from the pious grandmother, with closed eyes, lost in prayer and meditation, to the witch-like, sharp-featured, evil-looking old creature, who sits leaning on her staff, and looking sideways at her companions. Not much piety or meditation is visible in that keen old face, with its sharp black eyes, and tufts of snow-white hair. She looks as though she might have been a beauty in her day, but thoroughly vicious always.

Lugee's large picture of 'Eustache Lesueur among the Chartroux' has found place in this new gallery, as has also Hedouien's fine painting 'The Gleaners surprised by a Storm.' Worms's 'Romance à la Mode' is an anticipation of the recent rage among

painters and dramatists for the costumes of the Directory and the Consulate. His *Salon*, with its belles in short-waisted dresses, preternaturally long gloves, and pseudo-classic coiffures, its smirking, beruffled beaux, and its sentimental poet, declaiming his own composition, with an air and a grace, to the admiring applause of a marvellously gotten-up dame in a Cashmere shawl, and a round, Russian-looking cap, looks like a scene from 'Les Merveilleuses.' Vetter's 'Molière supping with Louis XIV.' is stiff and lifeless, and can bear no comparison with Gérôme's rendering of the same scene. Lereux's 'First-Born, a Bas-Breton Scene,' is charming in naïveté and rustic simplicity. The young peasant-father, in his picturesque Breton costume, his heavy sabots stuffed with straw, sits rocking the cradle of his infant, and gazing at it with open-mouthed admiration, not unmixed with wonder. The young mother, from her couch, her ruddy cheeks unpaled by her recent trial, looks at the pair with smiling though languid complacency, while an ancient gossip busies herself in household cares, in the background. This picture, though one of the gems of the *Salon* of 1864, has been hidden from view for some years past.

Passing entirely through the new gallery, we reach the three farthest rooms, in one of which we find Delaunay's 'Diana,' a graceful study of the nude. The goddess is apparently just startled by the approach of Actæon; she stands amid the rippling water of the sylvan stream, and holds her just-discarded drapery in her left hand. In this series of rooms has also been placed Bertrand's tender and exquisite 'Virginie.' The gentle heroine of Bernardin de St.-Pierre lies prostrate in death upon the sands, just beyond the reach of a vast wave that curves and plunges in the background; her slender, girlish form is clad in a dark-blue robe, and her sweet, almost childlike face fronts the spectator in the serenity of death. She looks as though the angry waves, repentant of their work, had borne her, in their remorse, to this last resting-place. The artist has perfectly caught the spirit of the romance. Nothing more innocently sweet and pathetic can be imagined than this dead image of girlish loveliness and grace.

The additions to the Luxembourg during the past year have neither been very remarkable in quality nor extensive in number. Among the most important are three drawings by Henri Regnault, one a study of a nook in the Alhambra, and the other two Spanish figures; all three showing the vigour of touch which characterises the works of this lamented young artist. From the last *Salon* comes the 'Jupiter and Sarpeden' of Henri Levy, a large composition, representing Death and Sleep bearing to Jove the dead body of his son Sarpeden, slain at the siege of Troy; and also the great prize painting by Lehoux, of 'The Martyrdom of St. Lawrence,' a huge, realistic picture of a most disagreeable subject. Maignan's 'Departure of the Fleet of Duke William of Normandy, en route to conquer England,' is also from the last *Salon*; though rather sketchy in treatment, it shows originality and force of conception. On the rocky shore of Normandy an assembled group watch the departing vessels: one fair young girl bewailing, probably, a departed lover, sinks down and hides her head in her hands; an exulting young mother holds aloft her babe in his swaddling-clothes, so that he may look at the ships as they go; a fine boy of fourteen gazes regretfully after the lessening sails, while an aged man, kneeling on the greensward stretches out his hands as if in benediction, as he looks his last farewell; a young girl tenderly supports him, while another reaches for the crutch which he in his

eagerness has flung aside. The subject is national and well-chosen, a fact which probably accounts for the success of the picture. M. Galbrund's beautiful pastel-portrait of a fair dame in white and wearing a Charlotte Corday cap is extremely popular with the copyists. So also is Rosa Bonheur's 'Labourage Niremais,' but truth compels me to state that the copies are usually very poor. The sculpture-room at the Luxembourg is next to receive the attention of the authorities. This gallery is one of very recent construction. It was founded so lately as 1870, by one of the employés of the Musée, who, finding the long, narrow room left vacant by some change in the offices, conceived the idea of making a sculpture-gallery of it. The windows were therefore half closed up with heavy inside shutters, the walls were hastily coloured with a red wash, and the best of the statues purchased for the imperial parks and gardens were selected from the Dépôt des Marbres in the Rue de Varennes, brought thither and arranged to the best advantage. Additions have been made to the collection from time to time, so that it now possesses a certain importance, though, as a rule, French sculptors in merit fall far below French painters. Two of the most meritorious works now on exhibition are Lehourel Durecher's 'Etre et Paraître,' and Jouffroy's 'Young Girl confiding her First Secret to Venus.' Fremiet, the unfortunate artist who designed the unlucky 'Jeanne d'Arc' for the Place des Pyramides, is represented here by two works, 'The Wounded Dog' and 'Pan and the Bears,' both of which have a certain merit, and are far from foreshadowing his total failure when he attempted to conceive and embody the image of the virgin heroine of France. "If he had only sought for a model among the intellectual and beautiful women of his nation, and had not taken the first chambermaid that came to hand, he would have done better," is one of the many sharp criticisms which that unlucky work has called forth. Sooth to say, there is a lack of elevation and imagination about the works of Fremiet which would argue his inability to cope with any such task as that which the republic, with strange lack of judgment, set him to execute. So great a hue and cry has been raised about his statue of Jeanne, that it is to be removed, and another one substituted.

We would remark, in conclusion, that the Luxembourg Gallery, under its new arrangement, has gained in contemporary interest what it has lost in artistic excellence. If the works of the great dead artists leave a void that cannot readily be filled, it is a source of satisfaction to the lover of art to learn from the walls of the Luxembourg what chance there is of finding a successor to these vanished sovereigns. Meissonier and Cabanel and Gérôme will one day belong to the past. Till that day comes, we rejoice to claim them as the art-heroes of the present. The Louvre is as a grand library, wherein the mighty works which have received the world's stamp of approbation are stored. The Luxembourg is, on the contrary, the vast publishing-house, where new and living genius finds place and publicity. Their union forms the grandest art-combination that the world has ever seen. Since Louis XVIII., in the year 1818, dedicated the Musée du Luxembourg to its present use and purpose, how many French artists, beginning with Pujol, Callet, and Vernet, have passed through its portals to the higher celebrity beyond! Ascending, not falling stars, they yet leave behind them a trail of glory that illumines the heaven of art with an unfading radiance.

LUCY H. HOOPER.

THE WOODLAND SPRING.

E. ROPPE, Engraver.

R. W. MARTIN, Sculptor.

THIS is the work of an artist whose sculptures, chiefly of an ideal character, have, within the last few years, been found in the annual exhibitions of the Royal Academy: among them may be pointed out 'Cupid,' contributed in 1867; a female figure, bearing a poetical quotation for its title, in 1868; which was succeeded in the following year by the work of which we give an engraving in this number of the ART JOURNAL, and in 1872 by a somewhat similar *rilievo*, 'The Pastoral Reed,' both of which are executed in terra-cotta. The composition of 'The Woodland Spring' is both

pleasing and pictorial; the figure of the girl, though in parts imperfect in modelling, is not ungraceful in attitude, as, with her left knee resting on a ledge of rock-work, green with moss and long grasses and tall rushes, and leaning against the top of the verdant bank, she stands in a thoughtful, meditative mood, while the water from the spring pours gently into the jug, already full to overflowing, though she heeds it not. Her face has sweet expression, even in its pensiveness, and her long hair streaming in the wind seems to harmonize with a mind which is evidently not quite at rest.